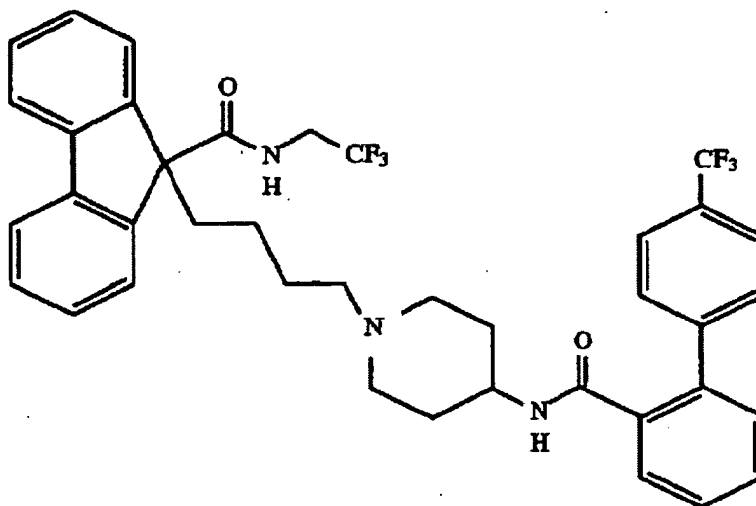


In the claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of treating a subject suffering from ~~a disorder associated with hyperlipidemia and/or hypercholesterolemia~~, the method comprising administering to the subject an effective amount of an MTP inhibitor ~~effective to ameliorate the disorder~~, wherein said administration comprises at least three step-wise, increasing dose levels ~~dosages~~ of the MTP inhibitors wherein a first dose level is from about 2 to about 13 mg/day, a second dose level is from about 5 to about 30mg/day, and a third dose level is from about 10 to about 50 mg/day; and wherein the MTP inhibitor is represented by:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof or the piperidine N-oxide thereof, and wherein each dose level is administered to the subject for about 1 to 4 weeks.

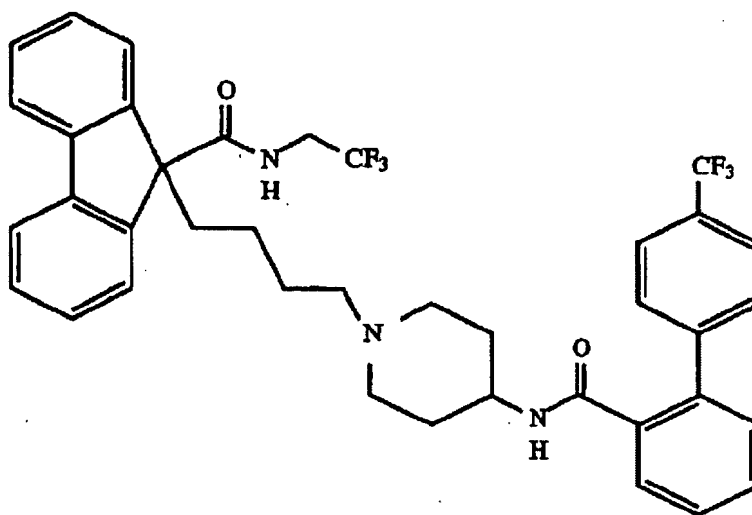
2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the disorder is severe hypercholesterolemia.
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein one or more of Total Cholesterol, LDL, fasting triglycerides (TG), VLDL, lipoprotein (a) (Lp(a)), and ~~apolipoproteins A-I, A-II, B, and E~~ lipoprotein B are reduced by at least 15%, compared to control levels.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein one or more of Total Cholesterol, LDL, fasting triglycerides (TG), VLDL, lipoprotein (a) (Lp(a)), and ~~apolipoproteins A-I, A-II, B, and E~~ lipoprotein B are reduced by at least 25%, compared to control levels.
5. (Canceled)
6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the MTP inhibitor is administered orally.
7. (Canceled)
8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~7~~ wherein said increasing dose levels ~~escalating doses~~ further comprise a fourth dose level.
9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~7~~ wherein said increasing dose levels ~~escalating doses~~ further comprise a fourth and a fifth dose level.
- 10.-15. (Canceled)
16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said MTP inhibitor is administered to said subject in combination with a further ~~lipid-modifying~~ compound selected from the group consisting of: HMG CoA reductase inhibitors, cholesterol absorption inhibitors, ezetimibe, squalene synthetase inhibitors, fibrates, bile acid sequestrants, statins, probucol, niacin, thiazolidinediones, and cholesterol ester transfer protein (CETP) inhibitors.
17. (Canceled)
18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16 wherein the MTP inhibitor and the further compound ~~lipid-modifying compounds~~ are present in the same dosage unit.
- 19.-25. (Canceled).

26. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the increasing dose levels comprise a fourth dose level from about 20 to about 60 mg/day and a fifth dose level from about 30 to about 75mg/day.

27. (New) A method of treating hyperlipidemia or hypercholesterolemia in a subject in need thereof, comprising:

initially administering to the subject a first dose level of about 2 to about 13 mg/day of a compound represented by:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof or the piperidine N-oxide thereof, for about 1 week to about 4 weeks,

administering an increasing second and third dose level of the compound for about 1 week to about 4 weeks each, wherein said second and third dose level are no more than 50% of the immediately following dose level.

28. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the further compound is ezetimibe.